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ABSTRACT

Members of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Public Relations Division were asked to nominate alumni, who were not full-time educators but who appeared to be excellent prospects for academic careers, for a study of attitudes of potential communication instructors toward teaching as a career move. The 27 nominees, most of them white, female graduate students or public relations practitioners, rated each of 10 factors as an advantage or disadvantage to public relations education. Overall, the results suggested a rather favorable view of public relations teaching as a job experience. However, most respondents believed salaries to be low and advancement opportunities limited considering the job experience and training required for academic work. Other findings include the following: (1) those with substantial graduate education tended more than others to rate academic careers favorably in terms of opportunities for creativity and genuine service, (2) those with more public relations work experience saw less opportunity for advancement in an academic career, (3) almost none of the respondents expressed concern about direct or "de facto" discrimination about women or minorities in academe, and (4) several respondents expressed interest in adjunct-faculty positions, which they felt required limited commitment, without appearing to recognize the rather restricted role and lack of security attached to such jobs. (HTH)

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Potential Female and Minority Communication Educators: An Exploratory Study of Their Views on Teaching as a Profession

by

Hugh M. Culbertson

Professor of Journalism

Ohio University

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Paper presented to mini-plenary session on "Recruiting Women and Minorities to Teach in Universities and Colleges," Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Gainesville, Florida, August 1984. The author acknowledges the valuable suggestions for the study from members of the AEJMC Public Relations Division Committee on Recruitment of Women and Minority Educators. Committee members include Linda Scanlan, Elizabeth Lance, Frederick Teahan and Carolyn Cline. Also, appreciation is extended for valuable input from Prof. Cheryl Moore of the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University, and from two student assistants at that school: Shekhar Hattangadi and Mary Montag.

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ABSTRACT: "Potential Communication Educators: An Exploratory Study of Their Views on Teaching as a Profession," by Hugh M. Culbertson, Professor of Journalism, Ohio University. (Paper presented to mini-plenary session on "Recruiting Women and Minorities to Teach in Universities and Colleges," Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Gainesville, Florida, August 1984.)

In late 1983 and early 1984, members of the Public Relations Division of AEJMC were asked to nominate alumni who were not full-time educators but who seemed like excellent prospects for academic careers. In all, 24 educators nominated 31 persons after two mailings of a nomination form. The nominators then collected data from 27 of these people, most of them white female graduate students or PR practitioners.

Respondents rated 10 factors as to whether each seemed to constitute an advantage when applied to PR education, a disadvantage, or neither. Factor analysis revealed three underlying areas of concern -- advancement (graduate study and gaining advancement within academic work), creative experience and variety (avoiding routines, serving society meaningfully and being creative), and classroom variety (having people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, as well as sexes, in class).

Overall, the data suggested a rather favorable view of PR teaching as a job experience. However, most respondents believed salaries to be low and advancement opportunities limited considering the job experience and training required for academic work. Some other specific findings:

1. Those with substantial graduate education tended more than others to rate academic careers favorably as to opportunities for creativity and genuine service.

2. The more PR work experience one had, the greater the likelihood that she or he would see little opportunity for advancement in an academic career. PR veterans, presumably, would perceive grad school and then "rookie" status in a new profession as requiring great personal sacrifice.

3. Flexibility of the academic schedule was seen by many as a plus in teaching, as was the opportunity to learn from varied sources. However, there was a corresponding concern that academic types must cope with lots of unproductive, archaic politics and with publish-or-perish pressures which limit flexibility.

4. Almost no respondents expressed concern about direct or "de facto" discrimination against women or minorities in academe. It appeared that general impressions were favorable in this area, but that few people -- even among those who'd given serious thought to a teaching career -- had much awareness of rather subtle types of discrimination noted in the literature on higher education.

5. Several people expressed interest in adjunct-faculty positions, which they felt required limited commitment, without appearing to recognize the rather restricted role and lack of security attached to such jobs.

Women and minority persons have begun training for and practicing public relations in large numbers recently. However, their role as educators in the field appears to have expanded less rapidly. This study sought to begin explaining the latter fact and to provide suggestions for recruitment of PR educators.

In 1968, women accounted for one-tenth of all Public Relations Society of America professional members.[1] This number increased to one of every seven by 1975,[2] one of four by 1980, and two of five by early 1984.[3]

PR-student numbers presumably help explain this growth and suggest it will continue. Females accounted for 67% of all PR majors in 1979,[4] and 78% of all PRSSA members in early 1984.[5]

While there appears to be little firm data on minority membership, anecdotal evidence suggests slow growth in this area, also.

At the same time, women accounted for only about one-fourth of the PR Division membership within AEJMC as recently as early 1983.[6] It's obviously very common for female as well as minority PR students to deal regularly with WASP male instructors and advisors.

This survey was done in the winter and spring of 1983-4 at the request of a PR Division committee on recruitment of female and minority educators. The author assumed such recruitment was needed for at least three related reasons.

First, academic training of practitioners may help shape the nature and focus of a profession or vocation. Sampson[7] and Mengus and Exum[8] have suggested that women and minority faculty can add a unique perspective to higher education.

These authors contend the dominant social-science paradigm has focused on discovery of universal laws or law-like statements supported by "hard" data, reflecting "male values, including individualism, achievement, mastery and detachment." On the other hand, women and minority scholars allegedly lean toward an alternative view seeking conclusions that are "historical, context-bound, concrete and particularistic."

Second, participation in such shaping may increase the stature and change the role of the shapers, including women and minorities. Broom reports evidence that female practitioners tend to play "communication technician" roles, emphasizing writing, editing and message production.[9] They appear to have focused less than men on audience study, counseling and management-level decision-making -- areas which Grunig and Hunt associate with recent developments in the evolution and growth of the PR function.[10]

Third, female and minority role models in the classroom may inspire female and minority students. As one respondent in the current study expressed it, a woman often finds little to motivate her when dealing with even a competent, successful male instructor. After all, she has grown up expecting men to succeed vocationally.

This study sought clues as to what promising prospective PR educators see as advantages and disadvantages of a teaching career. Also, open-ended questions probed specific beliefs and concerns which might underly the pluses and minuses cited. Finally, the researcher looked for clusters of beliefs, revealed in factor analysis, which go together empirically and may suggest basic concepts or meanings.

The analysis was largely non-theoretical. However, two hypotheses stemmed from work by Broom,[11] Acharya,[12] and others on roles which practitioners play. Drawing on counseling literature, these researchers have found that some practitioners serve largely as communication technicians. Others define and solve PR problems, act as liaisons between clients and publics, and apply rational problem-solving processes to PR planning.

It seemed likely that a broad definition of PR -- one going beyond the comm.-technician role -- would lead people to regard PR teaching as providing a genuine service to society. Only when playing such a broad role does the practitioner find it essential to study in depth the needs of key publics -- and the ways in which a boss or client can help meet these needs.

Hypothesis 1 specified that those who'd had considerable graduate education would tend more than others to see PR education as offering an opportunity for genuine, meaningful service to society. Reasoning here was two-fold:

1. Graduate education in mass communication and public relations emphasizes behavioral science more than message-production skills.[13] Such a focus should encourage respondents to take a broad, multi-faceted view of what PR is.

2. Education should be seen as essential when playing the "expert prescriber," "liaison," and "problem-solving process" roles in public relations. These activities draw heavily on behavioral science. It's often said, on the other hand, that one can learn communication-technician skills and concepts outside the classroom.

Hypothesis 2 holds that media experience should correlate negatively with perception of meaningful service to society as an advantage of work in PR education. The point here is that people with long media experience tend to see PR (and hence, perhaps, PR education) primarily in terms of its communication-technician aspect. After all, the media veteran encounters practitioners primarily when they are playing this role.

Two other hypotheses stemmed from common-sense thinking about the probable impact of working for several years in PR.

Hypothesis 3 predicts a negative association between years of experience in PR and the degree to which one perceives career advancement as an advantage of teaching. The reasoning here was simple. The practitioner who has worked (and presumably advanced to a degree) within the field for several years is apt to foresee a cut in status if she or he were to change careers and become a rookie academic working among colleagues with doctorates.

Hypothesis 4 specifies a negative association between PR experience and one's tendency to perceived creative opportunities as an advantage in teaching. The idea here is that, when advancing in the field, one gains greater autonomy and control over projects, opening avenues for creative endeavor. In the PR "veteran's" eyes, then, creativity in teaching may suffer by comparison.

Several exploratory analyses centered on how much thought one claims to have given to teaching as a personal career. Problem areas for recruitment might exist where those who'd given a great deal of thought to teaching reported less favorable views than did other respondents.

We were also interested in the extent to which potential educators -- especially those who'd thought about teaching seriously -- showed awareness of and concern with specific problems said to face women and minority educators. In a review of literature, Mengus and Exum focused on these concerns:

1. The high cost of graduate study, especially hard for minority students to cope with.

2. Discrimination in promotion and tenure due to "old boy networks" and alleged "structural transformation of higher education, creating a quasi-closed elite at the top and a permanent under-privileged stratum of untouchables at the bottom." After all, it's suggested, affirmative action applies more clearly to hiring than to tenure and promotion.

3. Saddling of younger faculty with heavy teaching loads and many committee assignments, neither of which leads clearly to quick professional advancement. Since they have entered teaching recently, many minority and female profs allegedly bear disproportionate burdens in this area.

4. A tendency for young faculty (hence often women and minorities) to receive joint appointments cutting across two or more academic units at a time when budgets in any one unit are tight. A joint appointee may be seen as marginal by each unit he or she works for. Further, each department or school involved may expect full-time output from such an appointee as a basis for tenure and promotion.

5. Lack of access to professional networks, research labs and prestigious universities.[14]

Methodology

In mid-December 1983, a nomination form was sent with a PR Division (AEJMC) newsletter to all division members. The form asked each member to select a former female or minority student, if one came to mind, who was not a full-time educator but seemed to be an especially promising teaching prospect. Members used their own selection criteria. It was hoped this might lead to a variety of nominations reflecting diverse views as to what PR education really involves. Data presented below suggest considerable variety was achieved.

The nomination form was sent again in early February 1984 to members who had not yet returned it. In all, 24 educators named 31 teaching prospects.

Each nominator was asked to interview, by phone or in person if possible, the individual he or she had named. This was done to reduce the non-response rate and to facilitate frank, complete answers. After all, respondents doubtless felt some need to criticize the interviewer's own profession. This might prove awkward with a complete stranger collecting data.

A final reminder letter went on May 1 to division members who had nominated respondents but hadn't collected data. In all, 27 of the 31 nominees provided useable data, giving a response rate of 87%. It appeared that all but about four respondents granted personal interviews. These four apparently filled out questionnaires in their own handwriting.

Of course, the survey must be viewed as exploratory. Clearly it failed to cover a representative sample of all potential PR educators in the United States. The study did appear to suggest some fairly widespread beliefs about teaching. However, further research is needed to learn which beliefs are most widely held and are seen as most salient.

Unfortunately, white females accounted for 21 of the 27 respondents. The two black males, two black females and two Hispanic females permitted no meaningful conclusions about these subgroups. However, perusal of the interview schedules showed no major differences in viewpoint between white-female and minority nominees.

The 27 respondents were playing varied roles when interviewed. Seven were graduate students, five part-time teachers, one a marketing researcher, and two newspaper reporter-editors. Within PR, three people reported working at the time for PR agencies, three for corporations, and four for non-profit and governmental organizations (including hospitals and the military). Two persons did not indicate current pursuits. While vocational sub-groups were too small to permit meaningful comparison, a look at the data showed few substantial differences among them as to general thinking about PR education.

Other descriptive data were as follows:

1. Twelve respondents had earned M. S. or M. A. degrees, with four of these people taking work beyond the master's but not holding the Ph. D. Of 15 without the master's, all but one had earned bachelor's degrees. Seven had completed the bachelor's only, and seven had taken some additional course work.

2. On the average, respondents reported 37 months of professional PR experience, almost one and one-half years (17.4 months) of professional (non-campus) media experience, and 11.6 months with students newspapers and other campus media. Estimates in each category were given to the nearest month.

3. Sixteen of the 27 reported having given a great deal of thought to a career in PR teaching. Of the others, seven had given some thought to such a career, while two reported giving little thought and two no thought at all.

4. Ten respondents reported having been undergraduate PR majors, while seven had enrolled in other Journalism sequences. Another seven had graduated with non-journalism majors ranging from English and organizational communication to management and marketing.

Cross-tabulations pitting each of these variables against holding of various beliefs about PR education revealed few clear-cut differences among subgroups. Differences which did seem especially meaningful are discussed below.

After providing the descriptive information just reported early in the interview, respondents were given 10 phrases (see table 1) which might apply to PR teaching as a career. These statements stemmed from the author's and others' (see acknowledgements at the beginning of the paper) belief that they might tap advantages and disadvantages from a female or minority perspective.

In each case, the respondent was asked whether she or he defined the opportunity (or need, as the case might be) denoted as an advantage for PR teaching, a disadvantage, or neither. Then the interviewer asked why she or he felt that way, provided time for thoughtful answers, and took careful notes.

After answering the structured questions, respondents were asked to give further comments on teaching as a career. In particular, several discussed the importance of having role models like oneself, satisfaction or dissatisfaction about the role models whom respondents had looked to while in school, and intensity of political back-biting and in-fighting in academe as compared with PR practice.

Prior to receiving the 10 items, respondents listed appeals and disadvantages which came to mind as they thought of PR teaching as a career.

Also, they guesstimated the highest salary, as well as the lowest, which a PR academician might reasonably expect after five or 10 years in the field. Estimates were given to the nearest $1,000. Respondents were asked to give general impressions, even if not based on firm information. One person did not estimate a highest salary, but all others provided both highest and lowest figures.

Data on advantages and disadvantages were subjected to factor analysis in an effort to identify item clusters. This effort was exploratory in light of the imprecise three-point scales associated with particular items and the small data base yielding unstable correlations. However, rather pure loadings of several items on three factors seemed to warrant presentation of such data -- and of related product-moment correlation coefficients.

Findings

Table 1 reveals a generally favorable view of teaching as a work experience. Eight of the 10 factors listed were seen by no more than four persons each (15% of the sample) as clear disadvantages.

Put table 1 about here.

Also, on the average in open-ended responses, people came up with 2.6 appealing features of teaching, 1.8 disadvantages.

However, problems arose in the areas of salaries and advancement. Sixteen saw salaries in PR teaching as a disadvantage, while only two defined them as a clear plus. Comparable figures for advancement opportunities were 13 (disadvantage) and five (advantage). Each of these results merits a closer look.

TABLE 1

Frequency with which Respondents Defined Various Aspects of Public Relations Teaching as Advantages, Disadvantages, or Neither

Item Evaluated	Advantage	Disadvantage	Neither
Salaries in PR teaching	2	16	6
Need (or opportunity) to complete graduate study to gain and advance in a teaching job	18	4	5
Opportunities (or lack of them) for advancement	5	13	6
Need (or opportunity) to teach classes including students of another race	18	0	7
Need (or opportunity) to teach classes, including one opposite sex, as students	12	0	14
Opportunity (or lack of it) to serve society in a meaningful way which really counts	22	0	4
Opportunities (or lack of them) to be creative	24	1	2
Opportunity (or lack of it) for variety (as opposed to following rigid routines in one's work)	24	1	2
Opportunity (or lack of it) to meet and work with interesting people	25	0	1
Opportunity (or lack of it) to maintain professional contacts and do consulting, and to work in the field, during the summer and during breaks between terms or semesters	20	3	3

Some rows do not sum to n=27 because "don't know" and "no answer" cases are deleted.

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Salaries. Salary estimates in table 2 are certainly low in light of the fact that they apply, hypothetically, to highly trained, experienced people who have changed careers and put in five or 10 years within a new realm of work. Overall, respondents estimated that the PR academic could expect, within five or ten years, to earn between $20,037 and $34,846.

A 1983 survey suggested the lower figure here is roughly comparable to what women with master's degrees were earning in jobs obtained right after graduation.[15] And a 1982 report indicated senior PR executives at Fortune 300 companies were then earning about $60,000 per year on the average -- almost twice the highest-salary estimate provided here for educators.[16]

Furthermore, while small n's precluded statistical significance, the 16 people who'd given a great deal of thought to a teaching career were more pessimistic about salaries than were others. In the same vein, amount of thought given to PR teaching as a career correlated negatively with the "advantageousness" ascribed to educator salaries ($r = -.49$, $p = .008$).

Interestingly, neither months of PR experience nor months of professional media experience correlated with thought given to a teaching career or with assessment and estimation of academic salaries. Apparently, then, the "careful thinker's" dim view of academic salaries was not due entirely to her or his working long enough to earn a lot so academic salaries looked paltry by comparison.

Put table 2 about here.

TABLE 2

Mean Estimates of Highest and Lowest Salary Figures

Which a Person Could Reasonably Expect After

5 or 10 Years in PR Teaching

	Respondents Who Had Given a Great Deal of Thought to PR Teaching	Respondents Who Had Not Given a Great Deal of Thought to PR Teaching	All Respondents
Estimated lowest expected salary	$19,250 n=16 s=4,160	$21,182 n=11 s=5,000	$20,037 n=27 s=4,530
Estimated highest expected salary	$33,600 n=15 s=10,580	$36,545 n=11 s=9,640	$34,846 n=26 s=10,100

t-tests reveal no significance difference on either dependent variable between those who have given a great deal of thought to teaching as a career and those who haven't. Each respondent gave salary estimates rounded off to the nearest $1,000 per year.

Advancement. In this area, four ideas came up quite often when respondents indicated why they felt as they did.

First, to gain advancement, one apparently must do lots of research and committee work not relevant to the central purpose of teaching. At least a dozen people said in one way or another that teaching seemed like a marvelous career area -- if they'd just let you teach.

Second, in academe, there are simply few rungs on the ladder of success. Most respondents perceived between three and five rungs, though only one person managed to name the four standard academic ranks (instructor, assistant professor, associate professor and professor). Several expressed uncertainty about the rank structure -- a rather surprising finding since, presumably, all respondents had dealt for at least four years with faculty directories and university bulletins which listed faculty members' ranks.

In an intriguing aside, only one respondent mentioned tenure as the key advancement decision involving a long-term commitment to a faculty member. This person made a point of explaining that tenure would be unimportant to her -- she'd teach, if she did so, to learn and not to seek job security. This squared with other open-ended responses suggesting the 27 people studied needed change and stimulation more than security. Several implied they liked the idea of teaching as a learning process and change of pace -- not as a permanent niche.

Third, formal advancement opportunities in academe do not appear to entail more creative, challenging duties. You teach, push pencils and attend committee meetings in the same way whether you are an instructor or a full professor. Your job does not seem to change as you advance, said the respondents.

Fourth, after a few years, one's only chance for advancement is to become an academic administrator. However, respondents viewed this as getting on a new ladder -- one many didn't like the sound of -- rather than moving further up the true academic rank structure. Not a single person appeared to look at an academic career largely as a potential source of status or power. At least two people felt scholars do not get the respect they really deserve in America. At the same time, most implied they didn't particularly value status or power -- and/or that they felt PR practice provided all they needed in this area.

Discrimination. Encouragingly, perhaps, not a single respondent indicated real concern about this area with regard to academe or PR practice. No one mentioned explicitly what she or he regarded as discrimination against women and/or minorities.

There was concern about the sacrifice -- financial and otherwise -- involved in graduate study as well as the emphasis on research and committee work at the expense of teaching. However, not a single person suggested explicitly that such factors may lead to "de facto" discrimination because, as the literature cited earlier suggests, they apply especially to younger faculty members, including many women and minorities.

Of course, the apparent absence of such concerns may reflect a lack of thought about the matter rather than endorsement of university affirmative-action practices. Problems may become apparent as a person actually enters academe. However, worry about possible discrimination did not seem to be a major barrier to favorable preliminary evaluation of academic careers.

In a related vein, no one expressed discomfort with the idea of having students of a different race or sex in a class she or he teaches. Of course, questions asked may not have gotten clearly and directly at the issue of intimidation by WASP or male students.

However, open-ended comments made it clear that, in respondents' eyes, having varied students in class would enhance stimulation and creativity -- and the ability to view PR problems from diverse perspectives. This appeared to outweigh possible intimidation by students unlike oneself. (After all, it would seem, successful young practitioners such as these probably aren't the type to be intimidated easily. Of course, others groups of would-be educators, chosen in other ways, might be.)

Some underlying factors. Exploratory factor analysis revealed three underlying concepts tapping perceived advantages and disadvantages of teaching careers:

Put table 3 about here.

1. Classroom variety -- having students of different races and the opposite sex in class. These items tapped a clear advantage of teaching, in most respondents' eyes, as shown in table 1.

2. Creative experience and service -- Those who saw any one of three items -- to serve society meaningfully, to be creative, and to work at varied tasks not tied to routines -- as a plus in teaching tended also to see the other items as as advantages. These notions, then, seemed inter-related.

TABLE 3

Factor Analysis of Items Related to Advantages and Disadvantages of Careers in Public Relations Teaching

Item	Factor 1 Classroom Variety	Factor 2 Creative Experience and Service	Factor 3 Advancement
Need (or opportunity) to teach classes including students of another race	.73	-.28	.46
Need (or opportunity) to teach classes including students of the opposite sex	.77	.23	-.05
Opportunity (or lack of it) to serve society in a meaningful way which really counts	.03	.72	.21
Opportunities (or lack of them) to be creative	-.03	.70	.08
Opportunity (or lack of it) for variety (as opposed to following rigid routines in one's work	.25	.77	.01
Opportunities (or lack of them) for advancement	-.31	.07	.65
Need (or opportunity) to complete graduate study to gain and advance in a teaching job	-.05	.41	.65
Percentage of variance accounted for in these items plus items on meeting interesting people, developing professional contacts. (These items are deleted from table because they did not meet criteria for use in defining a given factor.)	24%	20%	17%

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3. Advancement -- Apparently, while many saw advancement as a problem area in academe, those who defined it as a neutral or positive point for PR education tended to relish graduate study. Implicit here was an assumption that grad study is a key to academic advancement. At least two people noted that, while a 10-year or 30-year pro might get into academe, that person would eventually have tough sledding without the Ph. D.

Interestingly, assessments of educator salaries did not correlate substantially with these other advancement items. Several comments suggested the respondents tended to look upon advancement largely in terms of autonomy and responsibility -- not bucks.

Service. Hypotheses 1 and 2, stemming rather indirectly from the role concepts advanced by Broom and colleagues, were supported.

Regarding hypothesis 1, the higher one's level of education, the greater her or his tendency to see the opportunity for genuine service as a plus for academic work ($r=.37$, $p=.03$). At least three possible related explanations for this come to mind:

1. As one proceeds in grad school and begins to study and do research, she or he becomes involved in and aware of the more creative aspects of academe.

2. As a person studies behavioral-science content stressed in most mass-communication programs at the master's or Ph. D. level,[17] she or he comes to see the PR function in broader terms extending beyond the "communication technician" role. Such a broad view, in turn, may entail study of ways in which practitioners and people who train them serve society.

3. Such broadening of one's view about PR should lead to viewing of education as a key to the field's development and growth. Communication technicians probably tend to see course work as one -- but not the only -- way to hone skills and disseminate conventional wisdom. However, the other Broom, et al. roles simply cannot be played without behavioral-science techniques and concepts.

Hypothesis 2, specifying that media experience correlates negatively with perceived creativity as a PR-teaching advantage, was also supported ($r = -.38$, $p = .03$). Perhaps media experience led people to work with and think of practitioners playing routinized comm.-technician roles (and hence to think of educators as training people to play such roles).

Hypotheses 3 and 4, focusing on the impact of experience in PR, also gained support.

As stated in hypothesis 3, experience in PR correlated negatively with one's tendency to see advancement in academe as a plus ($r = -.27$, $p = .11$, between experience and perceived advantageousness of advancement per se; $r = -.56$, $p = .002$, between experience and a summed index covering the advantageousness of both advancement and graduate study). It appeared that, as one moves up in professional PR, academe loses attractiveness as a potential source of career advancement.

Also, as predicted in hypothesis 4, experience in PR correlated negatively with advantageousness accorded to academe as a potential source of creative experience and service. This held whether the dependent measure was perceived creativity in teaching alone ($r = -.47$, $p = .007$) or the summed index covering service, creativity and variety ($r = -.42$, $p = .01$).

We conjecture that, as a person advances in PR, she or he gains more creative opportunity and autonomy. Education, as an alternative career field, may come to suffer by comparison.

We now turn to themes mentioned by two or more people as they pondered why they regarded specific points as advantages or disadvantages in teaching.

Graduate study. Here two ideas were offered:

1. At least two people suggested graduate study is largely irrelevant to PR teaching -- that it has little to offer which can't be gleaned from practical experience. One respondent said she really didn't know what ought to go into a Ph. D. in the field. "The business world is oriented toward results," she added.

2. The demand for graduate study is unfortunate partly because there is pressure to seek a terminal degree at or near the beginning of one's academic career. Study for such a degree enforces specialization without allowing people to "try out the waters" in teaching and decide what they really want to specialize in.

Politics, infighting, committees, detail work and pencil pushing. This family of inter-related concerns showed up in at least eight interview schedules. At least three sub-themes became apparent.

First, the sheer variety and number of tasks facing college faculty creates a potential for early burnout. One respondent put the matter as follows:

> The pressures placed on a college PR teacher seem enormous. It appears that it's not enough for someone to just teach classes -- a person must also write books, consult, do research, head studies, and work on committees to advance in the field.

Second, detail work associated with the bureaucratic aspects of academe seems very unappealing to some practitioners, especially the fair number of them who see themselves as creative entrepreneurs and dislike bureaucracy. Interestingly, the person who expressed this view most clearly headed her own agency.

Third, universities have an archaic system of management and political process (one person associated it with the seventeenth century) which creates both red tape and political infighting. One respondent, a university admissions and recruitment officer, said she'd observed all this at close range and found it discouraging because she'd assumed university people would behave very rationally. Her comments:

> When I started working, I thought, "Boy, it's going to be really terrific to work at a university because you are working with other educated, intelligent people who have lofty goals, ideals and ambitions. You aren't going to have that infighting and political influence, and who is hanging around with whom, etc." I really was quite disillusioned to discover it characterized a university community (at that point within an administrative position). From my limited experience in non-academic work settings, I don't think it's much worse here than anywhere else. It just surprised me to find it here.

Meaningful service to society. The researcher expected to find some concerns expressed in this area:

1. The teacher's or scholar's impact on society is indirect and long-term -- coming as it does through the eventual efforts of students rather than through one's own personal output.

2. It's difficult to evaluate success or failure as a teacher -- at least, in the short run. A student simply can't assess a course until he or she has had some time to use its content and skills, and to explore its relationships with other classes and a job.

3. Good, highly motivated students will learn almost irrespective of what an instructor does. Also, the poor student often seems determined not to learn regardless of professorial performance.

Surprisingly, no one really expressed these concerns. Perhaps they are matters which only the veteran instructor has occasion to note. In any event, almost all respondents saw possible service to society as a plus for career educators.

Creative experience and service. Open-end comments in this area sometimes became quite eloquent and fervent -- particularly when focusing on learning, expansion of horizons, and escape from superficial values and expediency associated with the business world. At least three related points emerged quite often.

First, PR work can become repetitive and stifling if one holds the same job for a long period. (The person who said this constituted a one-person PR staff at a small hospital.) It was suggested that, especially in corporate PR, one can feel locked in and stifled. Also, a person can come to feel alone and out of touch when she or he is the only professional communicator in the office. Teaching was sometimes seen as a way out of these problems.

Second, while education offers variety and stimulation, it does so only if a prof can teach other than large, entry-level, lecture courses. At least four people perceived this can be a problem at some institutions. Commented one person, "It might get kind of old trying to teach principles for the eleventy-seventh time." However, others believed that, even in such courses, keeping students interested and providing pertinent professional contacts constituted a major challenge requiring creativity and aiding a professor's personal and professional development.

Third, a dozen people saw the professor's schedule, with summer and other breaks, as a blessing because it allows ample time for consulting, establishing professional contacts, self study, etc. At the same time, at least three or four felt such flexibility might be more apparent than real in light of heavy work loads, publish-or-perish pressures, etc.

Role models. At least three respondents indicated mild displeasure with the number and quality of female and minority role models they'd had while in school. One person, a news-ed major, speculated that she might have switched to PR as a freshman or sophomore if exposed to a good, caring female instructor in the area. She went on to say:

> It can be extremely significant to a woman, at least, to have a female mentor. I've had much more opportunity to do this as a working adult that I ever had as an undergraduate student. There is an element that says, "Gee whiz, if she can make it, I can make it." I think I had very fine instructors, was challenged and learned well. But I also think that, if I'd had more than one female instructor, it might have had a different kind of influence. I had very little interaction as an undergraduate student with females in either academic or administrative role modeling. About as far as it went was that the RAs in the dorm were women.

The same respondent noted that role modeling can be especially important for young women -- perhaps largely freshmen and sophomores -- who lack assertiveness and clear ideas about career and personal directions.

Summary and Conclusions

In late 1983 and early 1984, members of the Public Relations Division of AEJMC were asked to nominate alums who were not full-time educators but who seemed like excellent prospects for academic work. In all, 24 educators nominated 31 persons after two mailings of a nomination form.

Twenty-seven of these nominees were interviewed, representing a response rate of 87%. Much of the interviewing centered on whether respondents defined each of 10 concepts as advantages, disadvantages or neither as related to careers in PR education.

Advantageousness ratings, subjected to factor analysis, tentatively revealed three underlying areas of concern -- advancement (graduate study and gaining advancement within the field), creative experience and variety (avoiding routines, serving society meaningfully, and being creative), and classroom variety (having people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, as well as both sexes, in class).

Overall, the data paint a rather favorable view of FR teaching as a job experience, but tempered with a concern that academic work offers low salaries and few chances for genuine advancement.

Certainly, recruitment of FR educators poses problems. The data suggest that one key is to reach them early -- the more time bright young people spend as practitioners, the less attractive academe seems to them from the standpoint of advancement and creative work opportunity.

At least five respondents commented, without being asked explicitly, that they'd need several years of experience before they'd feel confident or credible standing before a class. If one accepts that as a needed career pattern, the recruiter of educators must ask a 21-year-old B. S. or B. A. recipient to:

1. Put in perhaps two to five years, at least, as a practitioner.

2. Return to school for about four years, with minimal pay, to earn a Ph. D.

3. Begin a new career as a "rookie" assistant prof or instructor -- perhaps at lower pay than she or he had prior to grad school.

All of this is a tall order and probably helps explain why few women and minority practitioners have flocked into the teaching profession.

The present research does not establish to what extent the advantages and disadvantages cited are real. Clearly, if pay is low, one must raise it and let prospective educators know about the increase in order to remove pay as a barrier to entering the field.

Tentative though they are, the data reported here support the following suggestions for an appeal to prospective academicians:

1. Reach them early. The longer they work in the field, the more they are likely to see an educational career as requiring great personal (as well as, perhaps, professional) sacrifice. Such commitment may be necessary. But it probably requires some long-run planning and thought which seem unlikely if a person reaches age 35 or 40 before the possibility dawns on her or him.

2. Emphasize that flexible schedules and consulting opportunities are often real -- perhaps by providing "case histories" of great and widespread, varied achievement in these areas. Most respondents were aware of such opportunities. However, some saw them as more apparent than real in light of publish-or-perish pressures and other demands on a professor's time.

3. Stress the importance of enrolling in a good, somewhat research-oriented grad school as preparation for an academic career. Given such a background, young scholars may come to see research as a privilege rather than an onerous duty. Most respondents queried here placed high value on creative effort. This suggests they may be more than happy to do research if they come to see it as meeting personal aspirations rather than simply bureaucratic rules and quotas.

4. Make the point that salaries aren't all that bad if one remembers they often require about nine months of formal work each year -- with additional earning opportunities in the "off seasons."

5. Portray convincingly the notions of idealism, helping young people as role models at a crucial time in their lives, rational inquiry as an alternative to shallowness and expediency, and integrative learning. These inter-related ideas came up repeatedly in open-ended comments about education as a career. Some practitioners apparently saw them as definite pluses.

6. Note that advancement -- especially in an academic setting -- involves something more than getting a new title and moving higher on an organizational chart. Maslow's notion of self-actualization might merit attention here. Also, presentations to young would-be educators might make a case that promotion <u>does</u> entail a job change for the better -- with more autonomy, decision-making input, help by student assistants, and fewer "pencil pushing" tasks. In academe, as elsewhere, one must "pay her or his dues" early in a career.

7. Make several points about the distinction between part-time adjunct-faculty status and pursuit of a full-time academic career. Many respondents saw several advantages to adjunct status which did not seem applicable to long-term work in academe. Among these pluses were flexibility -- the chance to teach only when schedules and personal inclinations permit -- and a chance to avoid onerous research and committee work.

These views certainly have validity, and adjunct faculty will surely continue to play a key role in PR education. However, from the would-be educator's viewpoint, there is another, perhaps darker, side to the adjunct-faculty coin -- a side which may not be apparent in the short run.

For one thing, adjunct-faculty status, in and of itself, appears to offer few advancement opportunities and little job security.

Second, lack of obligation to do research carries with it a lack of resources to do it if one wishes. It's reasonable to suppose that most adjunct faculty receive few research grants and have few student and other assistants at their disposal.

Third, non-participation in administration and committee work doubtless carries with it a lack of opportunity to take part in proposing and evaluating new courses -- and in making policy decisions which affect the growth and direction of PR education. The greater one's personal and psychological involvement in teaching, the more he or she probably feels a need to shape the nature of that activity.

Many profs soon learn that it's frustrating to teach one course which really ought to be two -- or to handle an advanced course without adequate prerequisites being offered. As a kind of outsider, the adjunct professor can sometimes do little but feel frustrated.

A final point warrants emphasis. No appeal should raise false expectations about education as a career field. Such an approach would ultimately lead to disillusionment and despair.

Footnotes

[1]Rea W. Smith, "Women in Public Relations," Public Relations Journal, Vol. 24, No. 10 (October 1968), pp. 26, 27 and 29.

[2]Sandra K. Gorney, "Status of Women in Public Relations," Public Relations Journal, Vol. 31, No. 5 (May 1975), pp. 10-13.

[3]Frederick H. Teahan, personal communication, June 1984.

[4]Paul V. Peterson, "J-School Enrollments Reach Record 71,594," Journalism Educator, Vol. 34, No. 4 (January 1980), p. 4.

[5]Frederick H. Teahan, personal communication, June 1984.

[6]Membership list, Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Columbia, South Carolina, December 1982.

[7]Edward E. Sampson, "Scientific Paradigms and Social Values: Wanted -- a Scientific Revolution," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol. 36, No. 11 (November 1978).

[8]Robert J. Mengus and William H. Exum, "Barriers to the Progress of Women and Minority Faculty," Journal of Higher Education, Vol. 54, No. 2 (March-April 1983), pp. 124-144.

[9]Glen M. Broom, "A Comparison of Sex Roles in Public Relations," Public Relations Review, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Fall 1982), pp. 17-22.

[10]James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt, Managing Public Relations (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983), pp. 25-43.

[11]Glen M. Broom and George D. Smith, "Testing the Practitioner's Impact on Clients," Public Relations Review, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Fall 1979), pp. 47-59.

[12]Lalit Acharya, "Practitioner Representations of Environmental Uncertainty: An Application of Multiple Discriminant Analysis," paper delivered to Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Corvallis, Oregon, August 1983.

[13]Michael Ryan, "Journalism Education at the Master's Level," Journalism Monographs, No. 66 (March 1980), pp. 9-12.

[14]Mengus and Exum, op. cit.

[15]Frederick H. Teahan, "New Professionals: A Profile," Public Relations Journal, Vol. 40, No. 3 (March 1984), pp. 26-29.

[16]Matthew M. Miller, "Corporate Public Relations Update," Public Relations Journal, Vol. 38, No. 12 (December 1982), pp. 21-24.

[17]Ryan, op. cit., pp. 9-12.